

Sandfield Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226866
Inspection date	06 November 2007
Inspector	Kate Bryan
Setting Address	Sandfield Pre-School, Sandfield Close, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE4 7RE
Telephone number	0116 2660333
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Registered person	Leicester City Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sandfield Pre-School was registered in 1999 and operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Sandfield Primary School in the Rushey Mead area of Leicester. The pre-school serves the local area and children come from a variety of cultural backgrounds.

The setting looks after children aged from three to five years and there are currently 37 children on roll all of whom receive funding for nursery education. The majority of children speak English as an additional language and the group supports some children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 08:30 until 11:00 and from 12:30 until 15:00.

There are four permanent staff working with the children, all of whom have relevant child care qualifications. The setting receives support from the local education authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where staff's high standards of cleanliness help to promote their good health. For example, staff clean tables with anti-bacterial spray. Children are protected from the risk of cross-infection as they use liquid soap and paper towels to wash their hands. They gain a good understanding of personal hygiene through daily routines such as washing their hands before meals and after using the toilet. Good systems for recording accidents and medication dispensed, first aid boxes and a high number of staff with first aid qualifications contribute to children's immediate safety and welfare. A policy for dealing with infectious diseases also ensures that the health of all children is well promoted.

Children enjoy snacks of fruit such as pear and mango and staff ensure they take account of all children's dietary requirements and maintain their health needs well. Water is available for children to access throughout the day and they also have milk at snack time. Snacks are social occasions and staff sit with children and talk to them about healthy options and why fruit and vegetables are good for them. Children also enjoy practical activities such as making rice crispies which underpin what they have learnt about healthy eating.

Children access the outdoor play area daily for fresh air and have access to scooters, bikes and balancing blocks. They develop their small hand skills well as they use equipment such as rolling pins, cutters, scissors and a computer mouse.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where staff's good understanding of safety issues effectively promotes their well-being. Children use good quality equipment and play materials and there are good systems in place to check that they remain safe for them to use. Staff pay good attention to safety issues when presenting toys and activities, ensuring that they are appropriate for the ages of children using them and allowing adequate space to minimise the risk of trips and falls.

Children are kept safe because the premises are secure. This means that children are not able to leave unsupervised and staff closely and effectively monitor access via the front door. Children are protected from the risk of accidental injury because staff supervise them and complete a risk assessment to reduce potential hazards. Daily checks are also in place to ensure all equipment is safe for children's use. Staff encourage children to think about their own safety by talking to them about hazards such as throwing sand with explanations about why this is not acceptable.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection. They are fully familiar with the setting's policies and procedures and the roles and responsibilities of all staff within this and have appropriate contact numbers readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in most areas of the Foundation Stage of learning because staff plan and provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Staff use their knowledge of the Foundation Stage well and have a clear understanding of what they expect children to learn from activities. For example, an activity involving colouring rangoli patterns was used to teach children about colours and festivals. Planning covers all areas of learning and is clearly linked to the stepping stones, sessions are evaluated well and used to inform future planning. Useful observations identify children's current stage of development and learning and assessments show what children have learnt and how they need to progress. Staff effectively support children's learning as they are enthusiastic and actively involved in activities, this helps children to persevere with activities such as making Diwali cards.

Children are happy at the group and confidently make choices from a good range offered in free play. This includes, the home corner, a writing area, water play and a computer. They listen attentively to stories and actively participate in group discussions about issues such as the weather because they are confident communicators. Children have a range of meaningful opportunities to develop their writing skills, for example writing lists in the role play area and making patterns in sand. This means most children use pencils with accuracy for early mark-making and some children are independently writing their name. Children are learning effectively about their place in the community and the needs of others as they fund raise for various events such as Children in Need. They have also enjoyed visits from a local farm, the book bus and a policeman so they understand how people in the community can help them. Staff encourage children to use books as these are easily accessible and displayed to reflect topics such as Diwali. Children also make their own choices from the book bus which promotes their choice and enjoyment well.

Children use numbers confidently and many opportunities are taken to count in circle time and snack time. They are also developing a good awareness of basic addition and subtraction and they sing songs which encourage them in this practice such as 'Five currant buns'. They have also completed work on shapes and have a developing understanding of measuring and weights as they help to make play dough. Children are developing an awareness of information technology as they have regular access to a computer and programmable toys. Children are learning effectively about their place in the community and the needs of others as they fund raise for various events such as Children in Need. They are developing a good awareness of how things grow and change as they grow cress and beans and look after a fish. Children can construct using junk and have created a clock to support work on nursery rhymes, for example 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock'. They also create pictures using a variety of media such as feathers, felt and glitter. A role play area also provides children with good opportunities to develop their imagination. Children have exercise daily but this is not structured effectively to ensure they learn any new skills and challenges are not in place to ensure older children make progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for because staff ensure they work with other professionals to meet their individual needs. Activities are adapted to make sure all children can join in and one to one support is provided if required. Individual education plans have been completed so children benefit from a consistent service at the group. For example, timers have been used to encourage children to concentrate on activities.

Children behave well and staff remind them of the golden rule which is to look and listen. Children know what behaviour is expected of them and a child proudly talks about how she shared a pen with her friend. Staff praise children constantly so they feel valued and children understand routines such as helping to tidy away toys. This helps them to feel they have made a positive contribution to the group. Staff are consistent in the way they deal with children and are positive role models as they remind children to share and be kind to each other.

Children benefit from a useful equal opportunities policy which works well in practice. For example, individual needs are discussed with parents and recorded to ensure specific needs are met appropriately. Staff members can speak a variety of languages that help children to settle and also use key words and pictures so children feel included in the group. Children learn about difference and diversity as they acknowledge a good range of festivals, such as Eid, Hanukah and Diwali.

Children receive an individual service because staff ensure they are always available to speak with parents and find out about children's changing needs. A key worker system also ensures parents have a known point of contact and this is particularly helpful for those with English as an additional language. To ensure children settle as quickly as possible parents are encouraged to visit the group and a settling-in board shows what activities children have enjoyed. Parents receive a good range of written information about the setting, this includes newsletters and a Welcome Pack which contains information about policies and procedures. Parents also have the opportunity to be involved in the group as there is a rota system in operation and they are invited to share their expertise and knowledge. For example, parents have visited to talk about Diwali and Eid. They can also participate in workshops, for example a book event, where they can join in and share learning with their child.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good.

Staff ensure parents can be involved in their child's learning as planning is displayed and an 'Activities at Home' sheet suggests ways in which they can work with their child. For example, by singing songs which accompany the number of the week. Parents receive a good range of information about the group which includes the six areas of learning. They are well informed of their child's progress by updates every six weeks and they contribute to target setting so they can see exactly how their child has progressed. A baseline assessment is completed with parents so staff have a good awareness of how they can progress children's learning. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children's personal, social and emotional skills are well supported and they learn effectively about a range of cultures and beliefs. Good behaviour is promoted and children know the rules to follow to ensure the group works well.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's welfare and safety is given high regard and maintained because robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure they are cared for by suitable staff. A sound induction procedure ensures that staff clearly understand and can effectively implement the group's policies and procedures, this means children's well-being and care are enhanced. This induction is also extended to students so they have a clear understanding about what is expected of them. The group is organised so that children can freely and safely move around and access resources for free play. Daily use is also made of the outdoor area to promote children's health and physical development.

Staffing levels ensure that children have good levels of adult input and staff are deployed effectively to keep children safe. All staff at the group have a childcare qualification which means children are cared for by staff who are up to date with practice. Training is well supported and includes first aid, food hygiene, speech, language and communication, the Foundation Stage and positive behaviour management. Staff work well as a team and are good role models for behaviour, they also interact well with the children who are secure and content at the group. Most legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being are in place. However, a record is not kept of the hours of children's attendance which means their safety may be compromised.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The manager works closely with staff to ensure that nursery education is delivered appropriately and she ensures that all staff are involved in planning. She is an effective lead at the group and has a vision which includes developing staff and maintaining good levels of care for children. Annual appraisals ensure that staff's training needs are met and management show a commitment to ensuring all staff undertake training to continue their professional development. Consistent procedures also ensure all children make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure the availability of hot water in the children's toilet, notify Ofsted of any changes to staff and nominated persons and retain and make accessible children's records. Hot water is now available so hygiene is maintained well. The provider also maintains records all required records and notifies Ofsted of staffing issues so they comply with all regulations.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to provide staff with opportunities to explore how they can more effectively use their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum whilst engaged in both planned and unplanned activities, and routine and everyday situations; ensure resources available for children's play effectively support learning in all clusters of each area of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan daily activities and routines effectively to ensure best use is made of time and learning opportunities for children. All staff use their knowledge of the Foundation Stage to plan meaningful activities for children and resources and opportunities ensure children's learning is progressed effectively through activities and routines.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the hours of children's attendance are recorded

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- make sure that physical development is planned so that children benefit from exercise and challenges.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk